

# Artifacts discovered

Native American artifacts dating back 8,000 years were discovered during an archaeological survey conducted before work got underway on the new I-5 interchange at NE 219th St. near Battle Ground.

State officials say the artifacts included fire-cracked rocks, charcoal, tools, spear points, and rock flakes left over when tools or other items were made.

Officials used carbon dating techniques to estimate the age of the items, and concluded that the site had been used periodically, including used as a campsite, over a long period of time. The carbon dating process put the age of the youngest artifacts at 1,000 years, and others as old as 8,000 years.

Officials declined to specify exactly where the items were found in the

construction site to prevent the public from exploring the area.

Scott Williams, an archaeologist with the state Department of Transportation, said state law requires that an archaeological survey be conducted before a project such as the new interchange is begun. In that survey, he said, archaeologists walk through the area, probing the soil with shovels in areas likely to have been used by Native Americans.

For the new I-5 interchange, the archaeological survey was conducted by Archaeological Investigations Northwest of Portland.

Attention is given to areas more likely to have been used by Native Americans, said Williams, which would exclude steep slopes, but include the tops of ridges and along streams banks.

Williams said the artifacts indicated "some sort of a campsite" had existed at the site. He said Native Americans heated rocks as one step in boiling water. The hot rocks would be placed in a basket with water, he said, to heat the water. The cracked rocks found near the I-5 project could have been used for this purpose, he said.

Roger Kiers, also an archaeologist with the state Department of Transportation in Olympia, said most often nothing of interest is found in pre-construction archaeological surveys.

But at the I-5/219th St. project, two sites close to each other contained artifacts. The combined size of the two sites was about 15 acres, he said.

Kiers said some stone flakes found at the site were likely debris left over when other items were manufactured, or "waste left over from making stone tools."

"There were a lot of chipped stones," said Kiers. "Some flakes had sharp edges and may have been used as cutting devices."

Kiers said the discovery has been interpreted as a short-term campsite used repeatedly over time. He said the location may have been used for processing game.

Some of the cracked rocks may have been used as a campfire, said Kiers, and others in boiling water. The rocks were generally the size of a fist, he said.

Kiers said the found artifacts included “cobble choppers” which are broken or sharpened rocks that could have been used to chop other materials.

Kiers said archaeologists believe the site was not occupied continuously. He said the consulting firm will spend another two months analyzing the artifacts and site information, and then issue a report.

Kiers said 5-6 boxes of artifacts were collected from the area, although because of careful packing, the boxes are not full of items. “When curating collections like this, we don’t just stuff everything into a box,” he said.

Kiers said another 10 boxes of fire-cracked rocks were also collected.

The discovery of charcoal, said Kiers, allowed the use of the carbon dating process which involves the rate of decay of radioactive isotopes. Rocks and rock chips cannot be dated in this manner, he said.

“We rarely find charcoal or datable material,” said Kiers. He theorized that clay soils in the area may have helped preserve the site from bacterial destruction.

Williams said Native Americans of thousands of years ago were likely ancestors of existing tribes.

After the study is completed, said Kiers, the artifacts will be placed in the Burke Museum in Seattle.

The Burke Museum is described as the northwest’s only museum of natural history, housing archaeological materials, totem poles, baskets, gems and artifacts from northwest coastal Native Americans, as well as the only dinosaur skeleton in the northwest. The Museum is located on the campus of the University of Washington.

Abbi Russell, a communications specialist with the state Department of Transportation, assisted The Reflector in discussing the archaeological discoveries with Williams and Kiers.

## **Woodlander was WAVE during world war**

by Bill Myers, staff reporter

Woodland senior citizen Ardice Zeckzer says she will always remember a U.S. Navy recruiting bus parked on a summer day in 1943 in front of the U.S. Post Office in her hometown of Littleton, New Hampshire.

Zeckzer, a young nursing student home on summer break from the Royal Victoria Nursing School in Montreal, Canada, boarded the bus. The decision altered her destiny.

“I told the recruiters that I just wanted to look around,” said Zeckzer. She said she looked, listened, and then enlisted.

It was a time when newspaper headlines announced campaigns in Sicily and the South Pacific. The news wasn’t always good. Zeckzer and other citizens knew that winning a war against Germany, Japan and Italy would require great sacrifices.

Zeckzer, born in Littleton on Feb. 5, 1923, had worked as a dry-goods clerk at Woolworths to save

money for college both before and after graduating from Littleton High School in 1941. She entered nursing school in Montreal in September 1942.

When she came home during the summer of 1943, she found that many of her friends, including an old high school boy friend, were already serving in the military. Recruiters aboard the Navy recruiting bus found Zeckzer quite eligible for the U.S. Navy WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Services) program.

Zeckzer said she attended boot camp at Hunters College, New York. "I loved to march, but could also sing and was assigned to be part of a Navy singing group that sang religious hymns to open a Sunday morning religious radio show," said Zeckzer.

Boot camp ended within a few weeks, and Zeckzer was reassigned to the U.S. Navy Hospital in San Diego, CA.

Zeckzer said her first assignment was to help teach first aid nursing skills to other WAVES who were going to be sent to Marine Corps training bases in the U.S.

"At that time, only RNs and doctors were being assigned to overseas stations," said Zeckzer.

Zeckzer was then ordered to help set up first aid stations at local Marine Corps bases. She helped organize and staff first aid stations known as sick bays at the Marine Corps Training Depot and the Camp Matthews Rifle Range. In the years that followed, she supervised female staff members at both stations, and saw that the stations had adequate supplies. "Many young Marines we met never returned after going overseas," she said.

Zeckzer said she met Max Zeckzer, a Navy corpsman from Detroit, MI, while managing the aid stations. They fell in love and were married prior to her discharge in October 1945. By the time of her discharge, she had attained the Navy rate of Pharmacists Mate First Class.

The newlyweds moved to Michigan and soon started a family. Zeckzer had six children, and soon found herself working as a teacher's aid and volunteering her time with scout groups. She and her husband were married for 30 years when Max died in 1975.

Zeckzer moved to Woodland in 1983, where one of her daughters had settled. She volunteered to help in the library at the Woodland Primary School, and was custodian at the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens for several years during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

With six grown children, 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, Zeckzer keeps busy with church and family activities. She is a member of the Highland Lutheran Church.

Zeckzer said she really didn't do anything to deserve a story about her military service. She had to be reminded that she was one of a group of brave girls who raised their hands when they didn't have to.

No one knows how many young Marines found life just a bit better because of her.

## **Open houses set on preservation of farm land**

Clark County officials will hold public open houses next week on a farm land preservation program

designed to deal with economic, social and political pressures that discourage farming.

The public is invited to attend an open house set for Mon., Nov. 10, 6-8 p.m., at the CASEE Center, 11104 NE 149th St., Brush Prairie, and Wed., Nov. 12, 6-8 p.m., at the Clark County Public Safety Complex, 505 NW 179th St., Ridgefield.

Patrick Lee of the County's Legacy Lands Program said an advisory committee drafted strategies intended to protect opportunities for people to pursue commercial and non-commercial agriculture.

A copy of those strategies is available for review at The Reflector, 20 NW 20th Ave., Battle Ground, and at [www.clark.wa.gov/legacylands/projects.html#farm](http://www.clark.wa.gov/legacylands/projects.html#farm)

The draft strategies plan deals with what the advisory committee concluded were barriers to agricultural activity. Most of the proposals would cost money, and funding sources are described.

### High cost of land

The report states that rising land values in Clark County encourage conversion of existing farms to residential or commercial uses, and make it difficult for farmers to acquire additional land or for new farmers to enter into agriculture.

The report suggests that publicly-owned land be leased to farmers. Of the 7,400 acres of land owned by Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, 6,200 acres are considered undeveloped. Only about 428 acres of that land is currently leased for agricultural purposes.

The report also recommends the use of cluster developments, transfer of development rights, and density bonuses to encourage landowners to keep their properties in agricultural uses. Consideration should be given, states the report, to expanding cluster subdivision applicability to additional rural zoning districts. A transfer of development rights program could allow rural centers to receive development rights purchased from surrounding rural and resource land owners.

In addition, state and federal grants could be used to acquire development rights on farm lands. In one such program, cities and counties may apply and must provide half of the project cost.

The report states that a "sizable amount of funds" would be needed to acquire development rights in the county. The funding matter could be put before voters, the report states.

The Conservation Areas Acquisition Plan adopted by the county in 2004 identifies habitat, greenway and farming areas and recommends acquiring development rights on 1,750 to 2,400 acres of farm land. That plan was not referred to voters. It carried a \$45 million to \$57 million price tag.

The report also recommends the creation of a "farm-link" program that would connect retiring farmers with other farmers or would-be farmers who could lease or purchase ongoing operations.

The report says that, nationwide, over half of all farm assets are held by farmers age 55 and over, and that a "considerable number of older farmers" are in Clark County, "many who know their children may not continue the family farm."

The county could create a clearinghouse to get retiring farmers in touch with those interested in farming activities, proposes the report.

### High production costs, low return

The report says Clark County farmers have difficulty making a living in dairy, vegetable, berry and livestock operations. The report defines a family wage as \$43,000 per year.

The report suggests that current use taxation be changed to include the acreage occupied by a home and landscaping.

The report also recommends that Clark County be allowed to join the state Farm Bureau's health care program.

Farmers may need help financing the purchase of equipment and supplies, and that a revolving fund should be established to provide such financing. The fund could be funded by farmers after start-up financing by the county.

The report suggests the development of a cost-sharing program to help farmers meet environmental regulatory requirements such as the cost of complying with water quality, habitat and erosion rules. Sources of funding need to be identified, said the report, to provide cost-sharing help.

### Institutional barriers

The report recommends the appointment of an Agricultural Commission to review proposed policies and regulations that could have impacts on farmers. At least half of the commission members should be producers.

The report also recommends that the county establish geographic agricultural districts where farming would be actively supported over the long term. Those areas would be blocks of land 100-150 acres in size. An inventory and map of existing agricultural operations in the county would be an initial step in this endeavor, the report states.

### Insufficient technical support

The report says that farmers do not have adequate technical support from the WSU Extension, Farm Service Agency, Clark Conservation District or the Natural Resources Conservation Service to meet their needs.

The report recommends the creation of a "friend of the farmer" program to clarify and strengthen the Right to Farm ordinance and mediate disputes. The report also recommends the creation of an endowed fund to provide money for specific research and technical assistance to benefit farmers. Budget resources would be needed, the report states.

### Marketing and promotion

The report suggests the creation of a "Clark County Fresh" logo and labels to promote area products, together with a funding plan to promote the program. The report also recommends the creation of an independent farm marketing association.

### Regulatory requirements

The report cites health regulations, building codes, labor laws and "general purposes regulations" that

provide barriers to agriculture.

The report recommends a review of building and health codes related to agriculture, and that permits and fees for agricultural structures and uses be reduced.

The report also supports direct marketing of agricultural products to consumers, and suggests that zoning codes be amended to preserve farm land.

The report recommends that a program be implemented for the transfer of water rights between agricultural producers.

The report supports housing for transient workers and recommends that county code conform to more lenient state requirements.

The report also states that many or most of the recommendations be adopted at once because a “piecemeal implementation of just one or two strategies will be insufficient.”

More information is available by calling Pat Lee, 397-2375, ext. 4070.